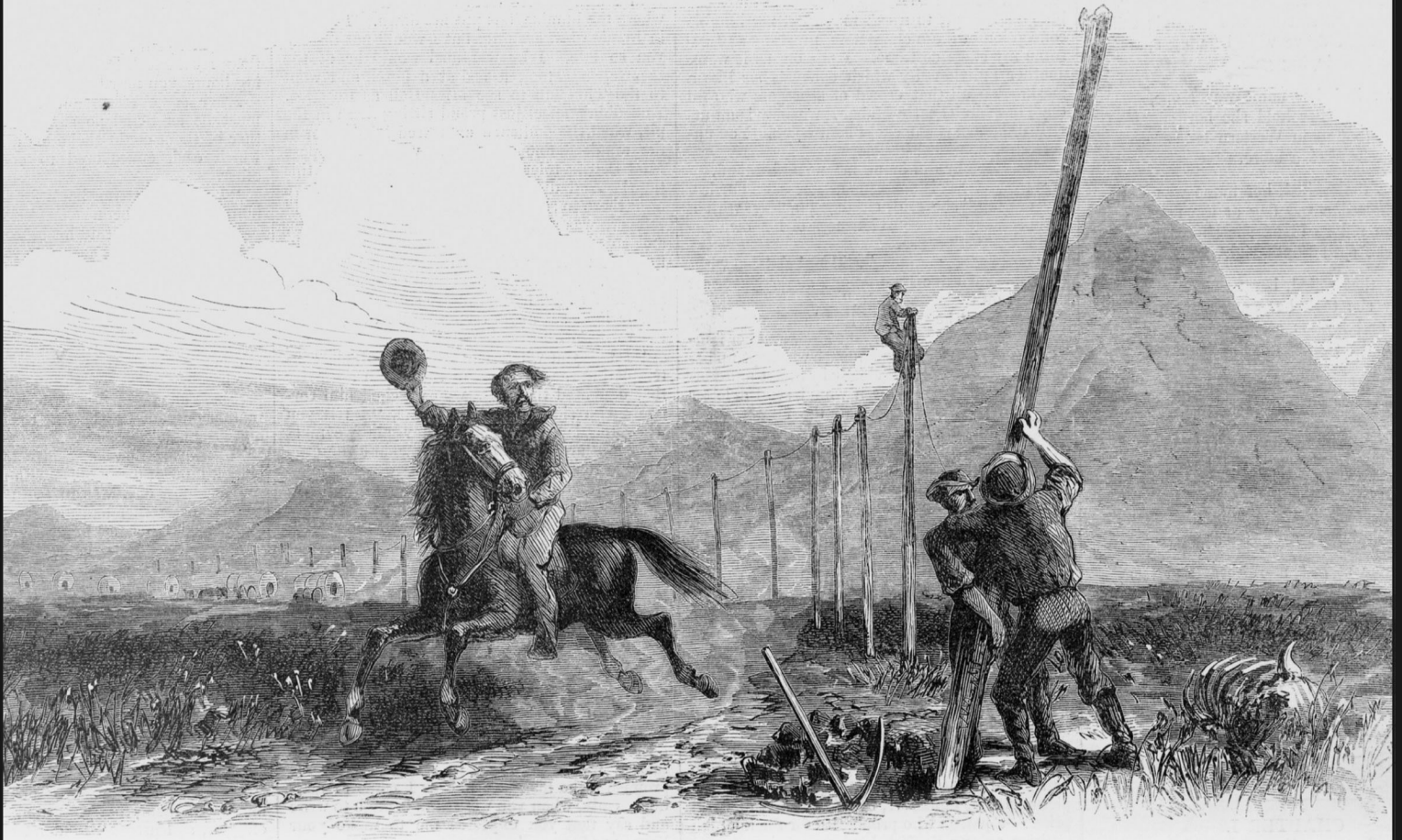


The Pony Express Rides Through Kansas

In order to send a letter overland to California, it had to travel a special way. On April 3, 1860, a young man on horseback left St. Joseph, Missouri. He carried leather saddlebags called mochilas. These bags were filled with mail. The rider rode as fast as he could. He traveled about 75 miles, where he gave the mailbags to another rider. After 10 days, the mail reached Sacramento, California—a 2,000-mile journey. This was the work of the Pony Express.





The Pony Express lasted only 18 months. It ended as a result of a new form of communication. It was called the telegraph. In 1844 Samuel F. Morse invented the telegraph. He did this by using electricity. Morse tapped on a special machine. It sent electrical pulses across telegraph lines. These clicks were short and long sounds. They sounded like dots and dashes. These sounds were understood as letters and the letters spelled words. He called it Morse Code.

It took many years to put up poles and string wire across the entire country. By 1860 this was finished and the telegraph was used to send messages. As a result of the telegraph, messages took minutes instead of days to cross the country. Therefore, the cost to send a telegram was much less. For these reasons, the Pony Express ended.